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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION
Land Utilization Division
Land Use Planning Section

BULLETIN OF FEDERAL AND STATE LEGISLATION AFFECTING LAND USE

No. 18

Week Ending May 6, 1937

(Primarily for the information of Land Use Planning personnel of the Resettlement Administration and collaborating offices and agencies.)

Legislatures now in Session:

California	Massachusetts	Oklahoma
Colorado	Michigan	Pennsylvania
Connecticut	Missouri	Rhode Island
Delaware	Nebraska	South Carolina
Florida	New Hampshire	Tennessee
Illinois	New Jersey	Texas
Maine	New York	Wisconsin
	Ohio	

Legislatures Adjourned:

Iowa April 20

I. FEDERAL LEGISLATION

LAND POLICY

H. R. 6748. Mr. Peterson (Georgia).

To establish a national land policy providing farm homesteads free of debt. The Secretary of Interior is authorized to purchase farm mortgages in effect at passage and upon application of mortgagor to release the obligation and cancel the balance of the indebtedness upon the conveyance by the mortgagor of title to the United States. The Secretary is further authorized to purchase farm lands held by mortgagees under foreclosures concluded between January 1, 1920 and date of Act. The lands so acquired to become public domain and after classification lands suitable for agriculture are to be open for entry under the homestead entry laws in tracts not less than 50 nor more than 160 acres, preference to be given to farm families and mortgagors living on encumbered lands at time of liquidation of indebtedness. Lands not suitable for agriculture are not subject to entry. Grants of homesteads hereunder shall not be liable to sale or encumbrance.

To Public Lands Committee, April 28.

II. STATE LEGISLATION

(Includes only outstanding proposals likely to be of interest to Legislatures other than the one in which the bill is introduced.)

AGRICULTURE

Montana. S. B. 188. Committee on Agriculture.

To authorize the Rural Rehabilitation Corporation to transfer to the United States any or all of its assets and property so that the administration of such assets and the expenditure of funds of the corporation may be coordinated with the expenditures of the United States Resettlement Administration for relief and rehabilitation purposes.

Approved March 18, Laws 1937, Chapter 195.

GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION

Delaware. S. B. 127. Mr. Steele.

To create a State Park Commission of 5 members for the purpose of establishing state parks and recreational areas.

Introduced April 15.

West Virginia. S.C.R. 19. Mr. Pelter.

To create an interim legislative committee - 5 senators and 5 representatives - to make a report, after investigation, to the next legislature relative to the reorganization of the state and local government in the interests of efficiency and economy, with recommendations for appropriate legislation.

Adopted March 12.

INTERSTATE COMPACTS

Texas. H. B. 511. Mr. Metcalfe.

To extend for two years the provisions of the Interstate Compact to conserve oil and gas from September 1, 1937.

Approved April 27.

Texas. H. B. 985. Mr. Hankamer.

To extend and ratify the provisions of the Rio Grande Compact with the States of Colorado and New Mexico with respect to the use of the waters of the Rio Grande River.

Approved April 27.

LAND USE

New York. A. B. 3109-2495. Mr. Taylor

S. B. 2569-2065. Mr. McCall

To appropriate \$25,000 to the Education Department, for a scientific survey of the natural resources of the state, no part of which may be used for personal services.

To Committee on Rules, April 21.

Washington. H. B. 336.

To provide for the creation of weed extermination areas with methods and regulations for destroying noxious weeds therein to be promulgated by the Director of Agriculture and the County Commissioners, in cooperation with the Agricultural Experiment Station. Approved March 17, Laws 1937, Chapter 194.

PLANNING

Maine. S. B. 300. Mr. Graces.

To authorize the state highway commission to enter into a project agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture to carry out a planning survey of the highways of the state for the purpose of developing a road building program including farm-to-market roads and the financing therefor for submission to the next legislature.

Approved April 21, Resolves 1937, Chapter 135.

Michigan. H. B. 510. Mr. Glass.

To authorize townships having a population of 10,000 or more to adopt zoning ordinances for the regulation of the use of land (urban).

To Committee on State Affairs, April 20.

Nebraska. Bill 531. Mr. Daffoe.

To create a State Planning Board of 14 members appointed by the Governor, the State Engineer, who shall be Chairman, and the Tax Commissioner, who shall be Secretary, and 12 citizens at large. The Board is authorized to make a survey and study of lands, buildings and equipment owned or controlled by the State and operated by the various State School Boards, and studies and surveys of the natural, social and economic resources of the State. The Board is further authorized to cooperate with the National Resources Committee and any other governmental agencies.

Approved April 15.

Oklahoma. S. B. 107. Mr. Rorschach.

To create a State Planning and Resources Board to provide for a survey of the agricultural, industrial, and human resources of the state for the conservation and better utilization of such resources. Such Board is to consist of 7 members appointed by the Governor, one of which shall be the Chairman of the State Soil Conservation Committee. The powers and duties now in the State Engineer and in the County Highway Engineer pertaining to waters, drainage, irrigation, and water control are to be transferred to the Planning and Resources Board. The powers and duties now existing in the State Planning Board, the Conservation Commission, and the Forest Commission, are all transferred to this Planning and Resources Board. The Board is given authority to acquire by purchase, lease or gift, lands, or any interest therein necessary to exercise its functions. It shall have authority to request the assistance of and cooperate with Federal agencies in the con-

struction of any project, and provide necessary lands for co-operation under the Federal Flood Control Act of 1936 (Public 738 - 74th Congress). Further authority is conferred upon the Board to regulate, control and prevent pollution of all streams or water in the state. An appropriation of \$175,000 is made for cooperation with the Flood Control Act. A Division of Forestry is provided for with an annual budget of \$25,000. A Division of State Planning is created with an annual budget of \$35,000. The Water Resources and Pollution activities are placed under a third division with an annual budget of \$51,950. State Parks are placed under the fourth division with an annual budget of \$58,300. The total annual appropriation for the board is \$300,000.

Approved April 15.

South Carolina. S. B. 810. Senate Finance Committee.

To create a State Planning Board of 12 including the State Superintendent of Education, Chairman Tax Commission, Highway Engineer, Director of Rural Sanitation, and State Forester. For the purpose of planning and accomplishing a coordinated, efficient and economic development of the state the board shall make surveys and investigations and make recommendations for the coordination of all research. The board shall cooperate with the planning authorities of the United States and adjacent states. There is an appropriation of \$7,500 for the next fiscal year.

Introduced April 22.

PUBLIC LANDS

Florida. H. B. 642. Mr. Kelly.

To appropriate \$100,000 for the biennium for acquisition and development of state forests and parks in cooperation with the Federal Government to be spent under the direction of the State Board of Forestry.

To Committee on State Forests and Parks, April 23.

REAL PROPERTY

Connecticut. H. B. 122.

To provide for reimbursement of the United States for work done on projects by the Emergency Conservation Corps on State forests and sold by the State. Such reimbursement shall be made from the sale of such State forests.

Approved April 24, Acts 1937, Public No. 70.

TAXATION

Delaware. H. B. 268. Mr. Ringler.

To exempt from taxation real property for the production of motion picture films for a period of 15 years.

Approved April 19.

Florida. H. B. 595. Mr. Smith.

To provide for the vesting of title in the State of land sold for

delinquent taxes and for the sale of such lands. Under this bill the owner's right of redemption will be cut off by the publication of a notice of expiration of redemption some time more than two and a half years after the original tax sale. After the time to redeem has expired and a deed has been issued to the State, the trustees of the internal improvement funds shall determine the best use of the reverted land and fix a price for it. The land may then be sold or leased, the taxing districts sharing ratably in the proceeds; however, for one year from the date of the deed, the former owner is given the exclusive right to purchase the land for the amount of accrued taxes and charges, or less if the Board of County Commissioners is willing. Sale may be on a ten year installment basis, with payment in lieu of taxes during the installment period. The act does not apply to land on which redemption on an installment basis is now being made or to homestead land unless the owner elects to have his land included. In the latter case, the homestead owner has an exclusive right of purchase for five years.

To Committee on Public Lands, April 22.

Michigan. H. B. 519. Mr. Rahoi.

To exempt from taxation homesteads and create a homestead property tax relief fund to be used for the relief from property taxation of bona fide homesteads when losses accrue to taxing units by reason of such exemptions.

To Committee on Taxation, April 21.

Wisconsin. S. B. 173. Highway Committee.

Amending the tax law to provide that any woodlot on a regularly operated farm, not exceeding one-fifth of the area of such farm, shall be exempt from taxation. This exemption also applies to any portion of a regularly operated farm which has a 30% slope, and such woodlots are included within sufficient fence and the owner has refrained from cultivating or grazing thereon and made reasonable effort to reforest slope lands to prevent erosion.

Approved April 22, Laws 1937, Chapter 79.

